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**Lipke**

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(54) **SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR HOLDING PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

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**A41D 1/04** (2006.01)  
**A41D 27/20** (2006.01)  
**A45F 4/00** (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **224/250; 224/575; 2/247**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** ..... **224/240, 224/250, 647, 649, 582, 583, 683; 190/108, 190/110; 2/247, 249**

See application file for complete search history.

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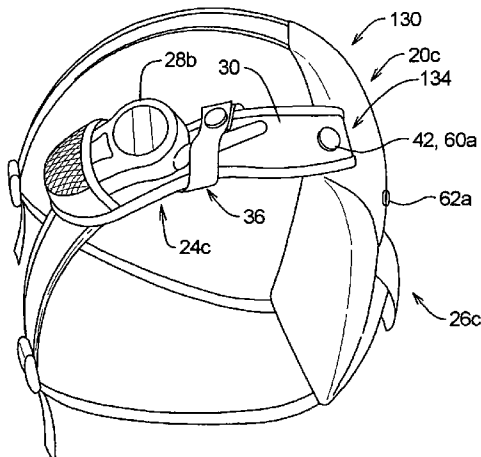
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A system for holding an electronic device comprising a first substrate, a pocket assembly, and a fastener system comprising first, second, third, fourth, and fifth fasteners. The first substrate is adapted to be supported by a wearer. The pocket assembly is adapted to hold the electronic device. The first and second fasteners are rigidly connected to the pocket assembly, while the third, fourth, and fifth fasteners are rigidly connected to the substrate. In a first mode, the first fastener engages the third fastener and the second fastener engages the fourth fastener to attach the pocket assembly to the first substrate. In a second mode, the first fastener engages the third fastener and the second fastener engages the fifth fastener to attach the pocket assembly to the first substrate.

**20 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets**



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FIG. 1

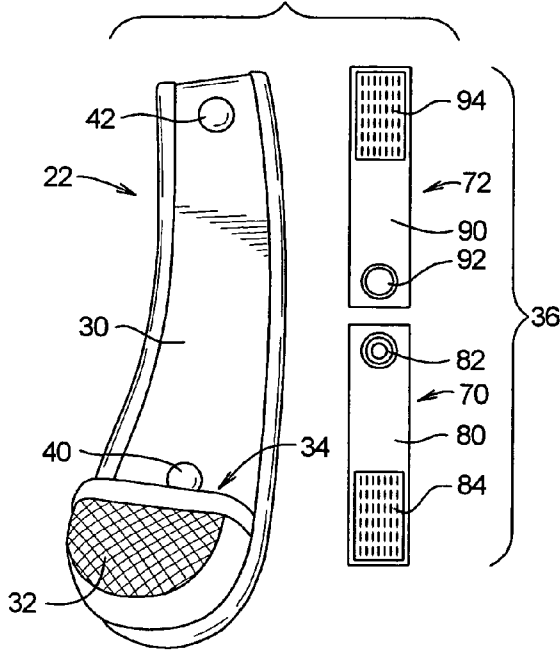


FIG. 2

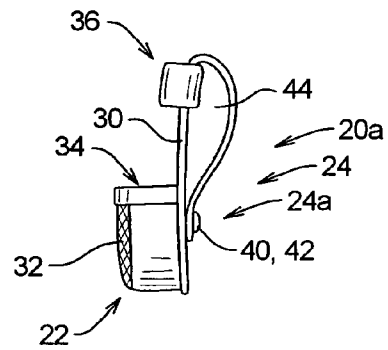


FIG. 3

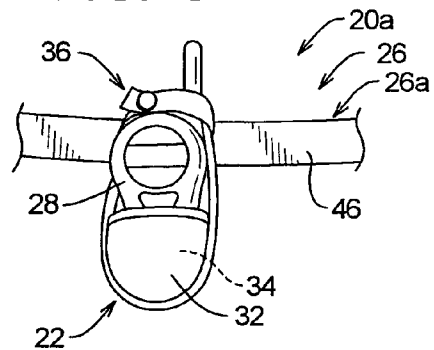


FIG. 4

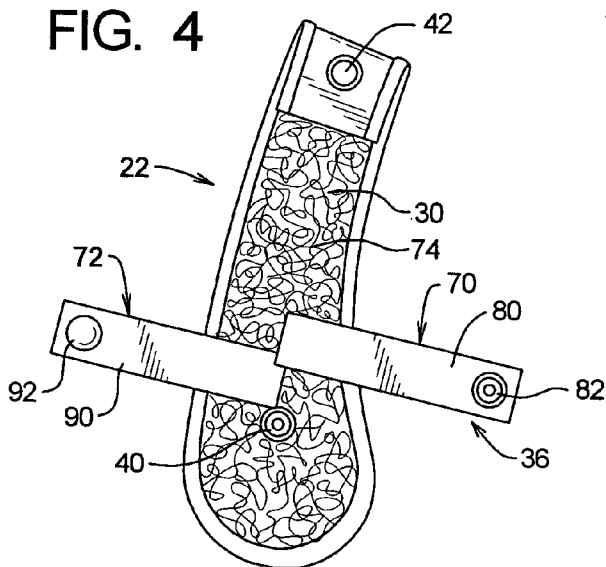


FIG. 5

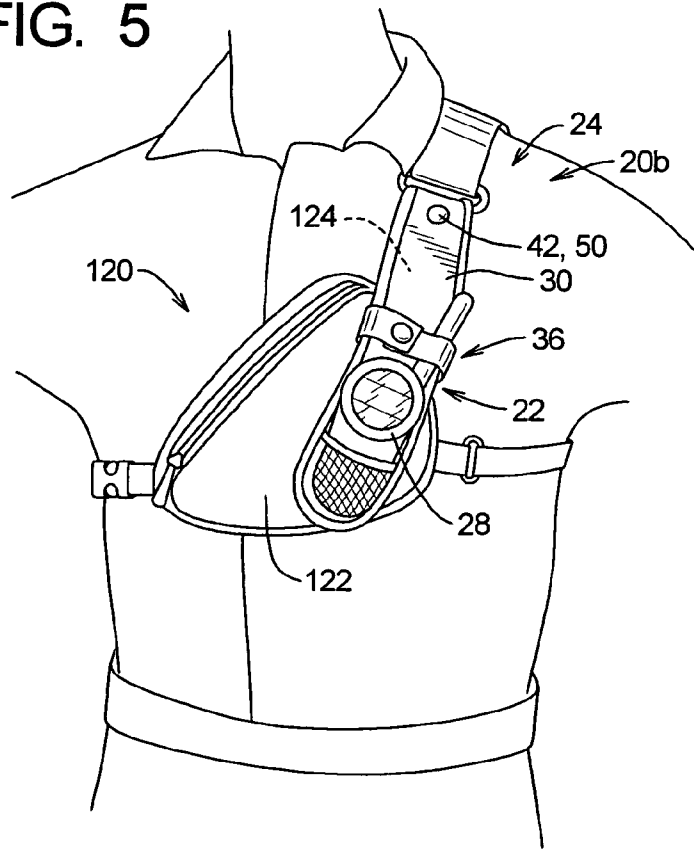


FIG. 6

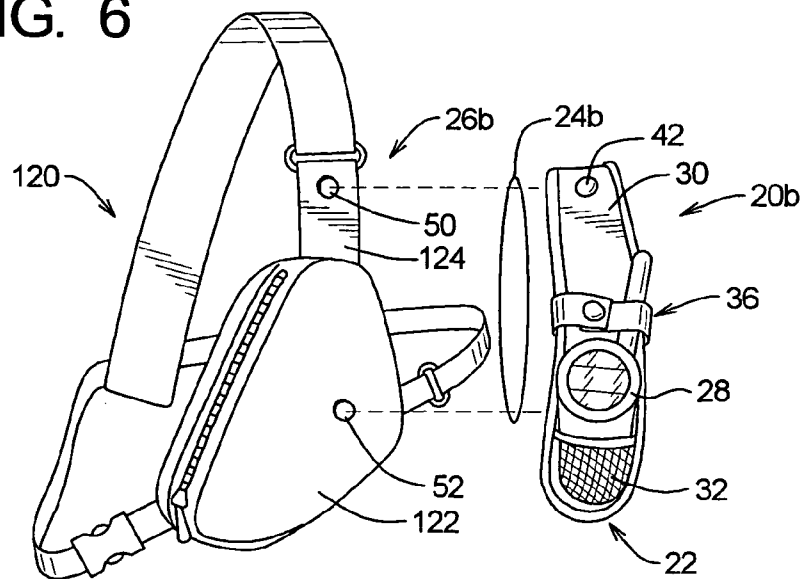


FIG. 7A

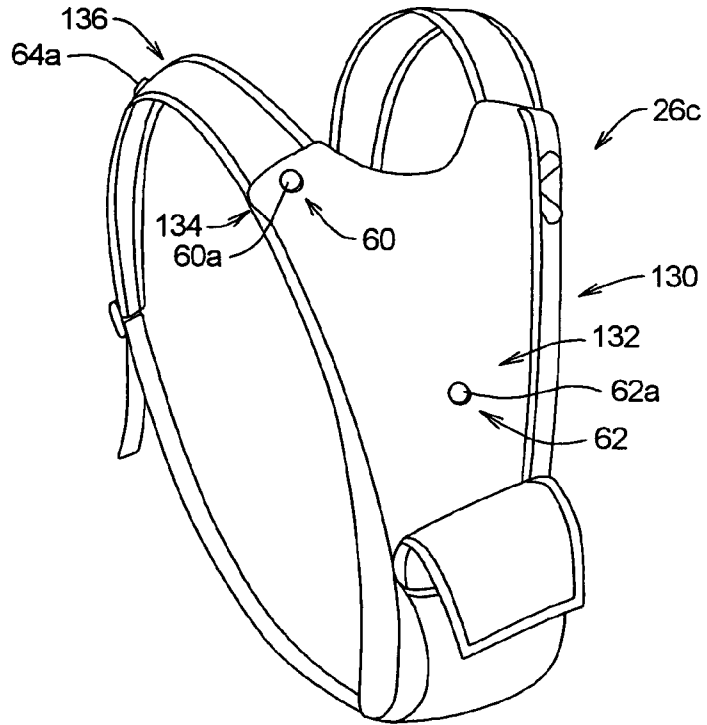


FIG. 7B

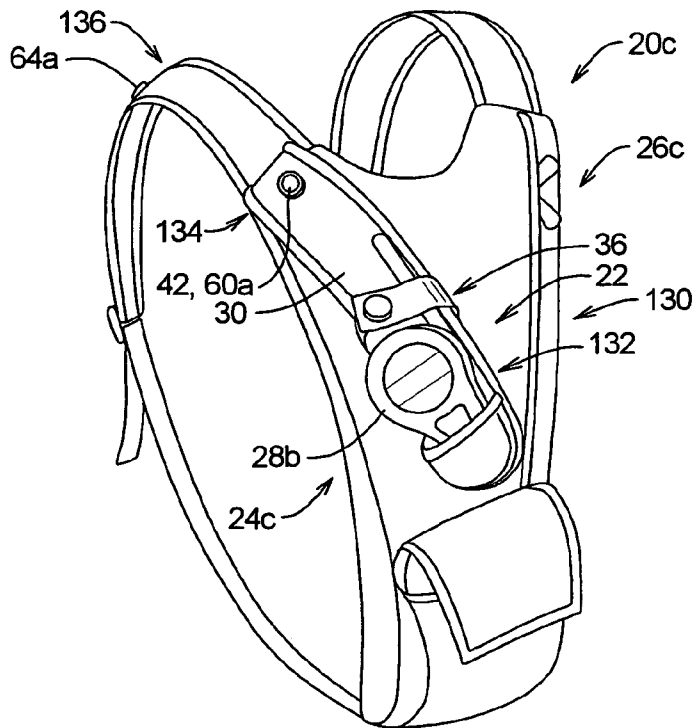


FIG. 8A

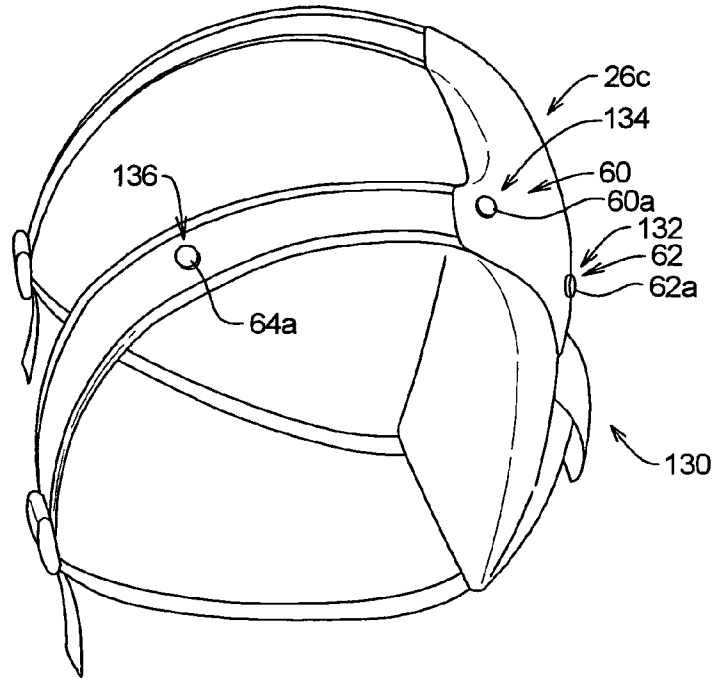


FIG. 8B

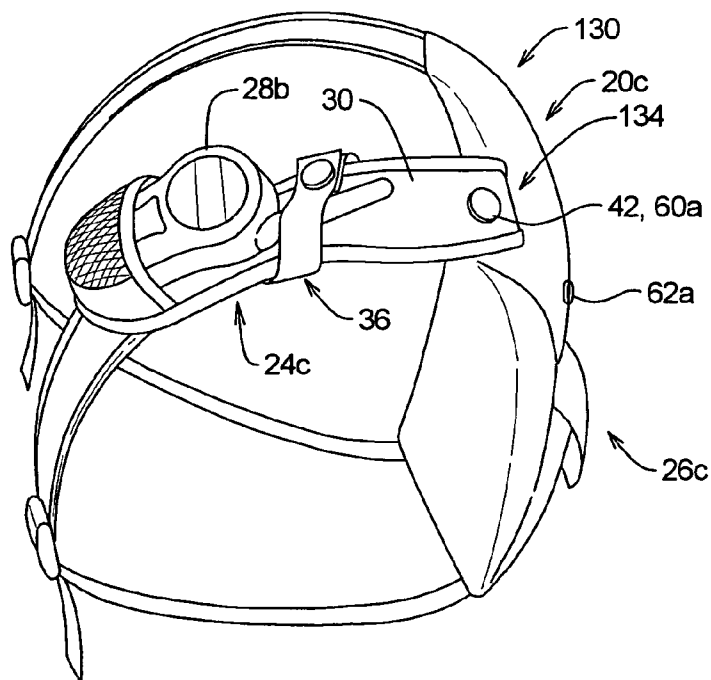


FIG. 9A

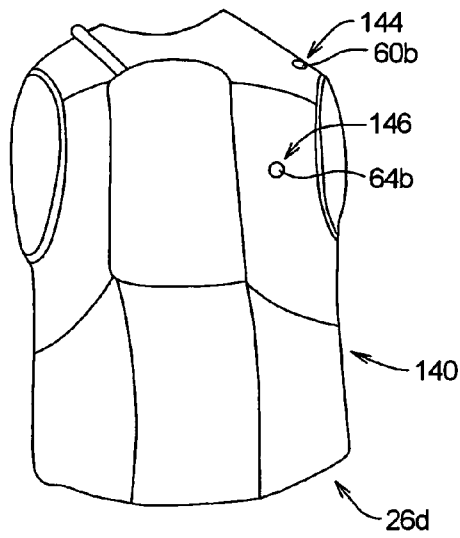


FIG. 9B

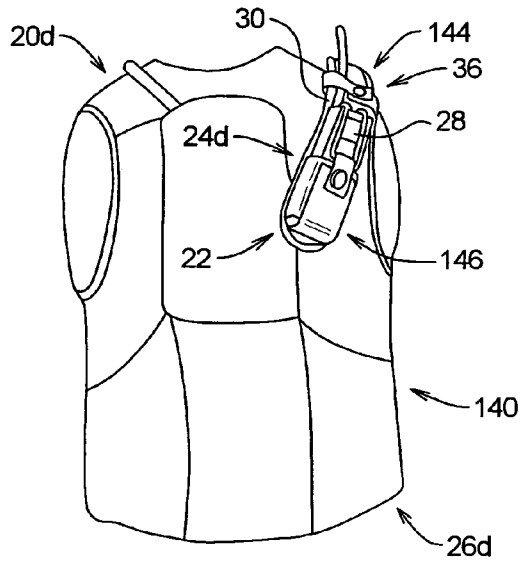


FIG. 10A

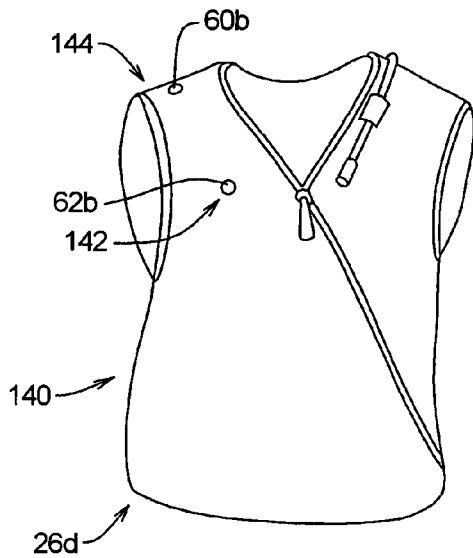
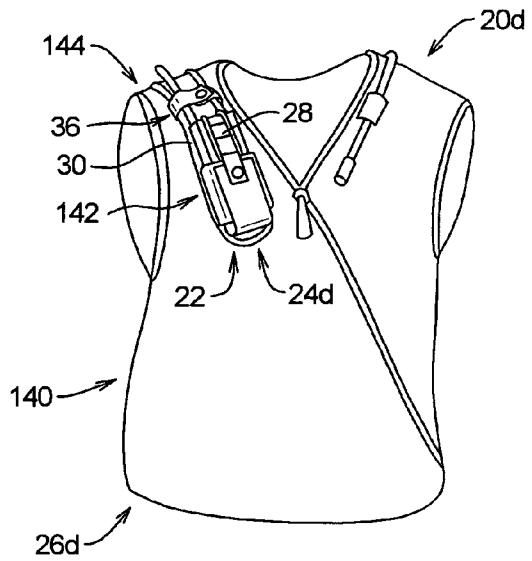


FIG. 10B



## SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR HOLDING PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES

### RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 60/357,420, which was filed on Feb. 14, 2002.

### TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to systems and methods for carrying electronic devices and, more specifically, to systems and methods that allow small items such as two-way radios to be carried during strenuous physical activities.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

People performing strenuous physical activities often carry small devices such as electronic devices, water bottles, and the like. These devices often allow or require human interaction during normal operation. Desirably, these devices can be used while performing the strenuous physical activity without the need for using hands. For example, a person may drink from the water bottle while performing a biking. As another example, a person may wish to listen and/or talk to portable electronic devices such as a radio transceiver.

The present invention is of particular significance in the context of a two-way radio transceiver and will be described below in that context. However, one of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the present invention may also be used with other portable devices such as water bottles, food canisters, cellular telephones, portable radio receivers, portable audio devices, and the like.

Radio transceivers that allow two-way communications have long been used by police, firefighters, ski patrol, and others. In addition, a new class of two-way radio transceivers has recently gained broad acceptance by the general public for recreational use. Modern radio transceivers are small and light-weight enough to be carried and even used during physical activities such as walking, biking, and skiing.

The present invention relates to holders for small devices such as radios that allow these devices to be used during strenuous physical activities. The present invention is particularly suited for use during physical activities, such as mountain biking or skiing, in which the device may interfere with the activity or that require use of the hands.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention may be embodied as a system for holding a device comprising a first substrate, a pocket assembly, and a fastener system comprising first, second, third, fourth, and fifth fasteners. The first substrate is adapted to be supported by a wearer. The pocket assembly is adapted to hold the device. The first and second fasteners are rigidly connected to the pocket assembly, while the third, fourth, and fifth fasteners are rigidly connected to the substrate. In a first mode, the first fastener engages the third fastener and the second fastener engages the fourth fastener to attach the pocket assembly to the first substrate. In a second mode, the first fastener engages the third fastener and the second fastener engages the fifth fastener to attach the pocket assembly to the first substrate. The present invention may further be embodied as a method of holding a device during a strenuous physical activity.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is an exploded view of a radio pocket assembly of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a side elevation view of the radio pocket assembly of FIG. 1 in a first configuration;

FIG. 3 is a front elevation view of the radio pocket assembly of FIG. 1 in the first configuration shown in FIG. 2 being used in a first mode in which it is attached to a belt;

FIG. 4 is a rear elevation view of the radio pocket assembly of FIG. 1;

FIG. 5 is a front elevation view of the radio pocket assembly of FIG. 1 in a second configuration being used in a second mode in which it is attached to a chest harness;

FIG. 6 is an exploded view depicting the formation of the radio pocket system of FIG. 5;

FIGS. 7a and 8a are perspective views of a backpack that may be used as part of the radio pocket system with the present invention in a third mode;

FIGS. 7b and 8b are perspective views of the radio pocket system of the present invention in its third mode;

FIGS. 9a and 10a are front and rear views of a vest that may form a portion of the radio pocket system of the present invention;

FIGS. 9b and 10b are views similar to 9a and 10a depicting the entire radio pocket system in its third mode.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Depicted at 20 in the drawing is a radio pocket system constructed in accordance with, and embodying, the principals of the present invention. The radio pocket system 20 may exist or be used in several different modes of operation. In particular, the radio pocket system 20 may be used in a first mode 20a as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, and a second mode 20b is shown in FIGS. 5 and 6, and/or in a third mode as shown in FIGS. 7b, 8b, and 10b.

The radio pocket system 20 comprises a radio pocket assembly 22, a fastener system 24, and a substrate 26. The radio pocket assembly 22 is adapted to hold a radio 28. The fastener system 24 is adapted to secure the radio pocket assembly 22 to the substrate 26.

The substrate 26 can take one or more of many different forms. Four different exemplary forms of the substrate will be described herein. The fastener system 24 may also take different forms depending on the substrate 26. In addition, the radio pocket assembly 22 exists in one of two different configurations depending on the particular substrate 26 and form of the fastener system 24.

Referring now to FIGS. 1-4, it can be seen that the radio pocket assembly 22 comprises a pocket rear panel 30 and a pocket front panel 32. These panels 30 and 32 are connected together to form a radio cavity 34 in which the radio 28 is supported. The exemplary radio pocket assembly 22 further comprises a retainer strap system 36 as will be described in further detail below. The details of construction of the pocket rear and front panels 30 and 32 and the retainer strap system 36 are not important to the present invention. The radio pocket assembly 22 will thus be described herein only to the extent necessary for complete understanding of the present invention.

As perhaps best shown in FIGS. 1, 2, and 4, a male fastener 40 (first fastener) and a female fastener 42 (second fastener) are secured to the pocket rear panel 30. The example fasteners 40 and 42 are snap fasteners conventionally available on the market place. These snap fasteners are

riveted into holes formed in the rear panel **30** in a conventional manner to prevent relative movement between the panel **30** and the fasteners **40** and **42** under normal conditions.

Fasteners other than snap fasteners may be used to form the male and female fasteners **40** and **42**. For example, a hook and loop type fastener may be used under some circumstances. In this case, the hook portion may take the place of one of the male or female fasteners **40** and **42**, and the loop portion will take the place of the other of the fasteners **40** and **42**. In another situation, buttons and buttonholes may be substituted for these example snap fasteners **40** and **42**. The fasteners **40** and **42** may also be replaced by buckles and other means of fastening straps or fabric together.

It is also not essential that the male and female snap fasteners **40** and **42** be located on the panel **30** exactly as shown in FIG. 1. For example, one of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the positions of these fasteners **40** and **42** may be reversed. The relative position and location of fasteners used in connection with the substrates **26** described in further detail below should correspond to the relative positions and locations of the fasteners **40** and **42**.

The three modes in which the system **20** may be used will now be discussed in further detail.

As shown in FIG. 2 the male and female snap fasteners **40** and **42** allow the radio pocket assembly **22** to be placed into a first configuration in which it defines a belt opening **44**. In this configuration, the radio pocket system **20** is in its first mode **20a** and can be used to suspend the radio **28** from a belt **46** defining a first substrate **26a**.

Referring now to FIG. 6, depicted therein is a second example substrate **26b** on which are formed a male fastener **50** (third fastener) and a female fastener **52** (fourth fastener). With this second exemplary substrate **26b**, the radio pocket system **20** may be embodied in a second mode **20b** in which the male fastener **40** is connected to the female fastener **52** and the female fastener **42** is connected to the male fastener **50** to define a fastener system **24b**. When the system **20** is in this second mode **20b**, the pocket rear panel **30** is in a generally flat configuration. The locations of the male and female fasteners **50** and **52** on the second substrate **26b** are not critical, but the distance between the fasteners **50** and **52** is generally the same as the distance between the first male and female fasteners **40** and **42** when the pocket rear panel **30** is flat.

Referring now to FIGS. 7a and 8a, depicted therein is yet another exemplary substrate **26c** to which the radio pocket system **20** may secure the radio **28**. Secured to the third example substrate **26c** are a male fastener **60a** (third fastener), a front female fastener **62a** (fourth fastener), and a rear female fastener **64a** (fifth fastener). The exact locations of these fasteners **60a**, **62a**, and **64a** are somewhat arbitrary. However, the distance between the male fastener **60a** and the female fasteners **62a** and **64a** should be approximately the same as the distance between the fasteners **40** and **42** when the pocket rear panel **30** is flat.

As shown in FIGS. 7b and 8b, the radio pocket system **20** may exist in a third mode **20c** in which it secures the radio **28** to the third substrate **26c**. In addition, the radio pocket system **20** allows the radio **28** to be located in one of first and second secured positions as can be seen by comparison in FIGS. 7b and 8b.

More specifically, when the radio pocket system **20** is in the third mode **20c** and the radio **28** is in its first position (FIG. 7B), a fastening system **24c** is formed by the engagement of the male fastener **40** (first fastener) with the front

female fastener **62a** (fourth fastener) and of the female fastener **42** with the male fastener **60a** (third fastener). When the system **20** is in the third mode **20c** and the radio **28** is in its second position (FIG. 8B), the fastener system **24c** is formed by the engagement of the male fastener **40** (first fastener) with the rear female fastener **64a** (fifth fastener) and of the female fastener **42** (second fastener) with the male fastener **60a** (fourth fastener).

Referring now to FIGS. 9a and 10a, depicted therein is yet another example substrate **26d** that may form a part of the radio system **20**. A male fastener **60b** (third fastener), front female fastener **62b** (fourth fastener), and rear female fastener **64b** (fifth fastener) are secured to the example substrate **26d**. Again, the locations of these fasteners **60b**, **62b**, and **64b** are somewhat arbitrary but should correspond fairly closely to the spacing of the first male and female fasteners **40** and **42** from each other on the pocket rear panel **30** when this panel **30** is laid flat.

With the exemplary substrate **26d**, the radio pocket system **20** may exist in yet another mode **20d** similar to the third mode **20c** described above. In particular, the radio **28** can be attached to the substrate **26d** in one of two positions. In a first position as shown in FIG. 10b, the male fastener **40** (first fastener) engages the front female fastener **62b** (fourth fastener) and the female fastener **42** engages the male fastener **60b** (third fastener) to form a fastener system **24d**. When the radio **28** is in its second position as shown in FIG. 9b, the fastener system **24d** is formed by the engagement of the male fastener **40** (first fastener) with the rear female fastener **64b** (fifth fastener) and the female fastener **42** (second fastener) with the male fastener **60b** (third fastener).

The radio pocket system **20** described herein thus provides significant flexibility to the user as to how and where the pocket assembly **22** is attached to different types of substrates **26**. Further, with some of these substrates, it is desirable to locate the radio **28** in different positions depending on how the substrate **26** itself is being used. The radio pocket system **20** of the present invention allows the radio to be located in these different positions as well.

With the foregoing basic understanding of the present invention, the exemplary radio pocket system **20** and exemplary substrates **26** to which the system **20** attaches the radio **28** will now be described in further detail.

Referring initially to FIGS. 1 and 4, the exemplary retainer strap system **36** will now be described in further detail. As shown in FIGS. 1 and 4, the retainer strap system **36** comprises a first strap assembly **70**, a second strap assembly **72**, and a loop panel **74**. The loop panel **74** is secured to the side of a pocket rear panel **30** opposite the pocket front panel **32** and radio cavity **34**.

The first strap assembly **70** comprises a first strap member **80**, a first strap male fastener **82**, and a first hook panel **84**. The second strap assembly **72** comprises a second strap member **90**, a strap female fastener **92**, and a second hook panel **94**. The fasteners **82**, **92** and hook panels **84**, **94** are secured to opposite ends of the strap members **80**, **90**, respectively.

As shown in FIG. 4, the hook panels **84** and **94** are adapted to engage the loop panel **74** to form a hook/loop fastener system **76** that inhibits movement of the strap members **80** and **90** relative to the pocket rear panel **30**. As shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, the strap members **80** and **90** extend around the pocket rear panel **30** such that the strap fasteners **80** and **92** can be joined together just above the radio cavity **34**. Accordingly, as shown in FIG. 3, the exemplary retainer

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strap 36 may engage an upper portion of the radio 28 to secure the radio 28 with at least partly within the radio cavity 34.

The retainer strap system 36 is not necessary to practice the present invention in its broadest form. The retainer strap system 36 may thus be omitted, or other similar systems may be used in conjunction with and/or instead of the exemplary system 36.

Referring now for a moment back to FIG. 6, it can be seen that the exemplary substrate 26b shown therein is formed on a chest harness 120. The chest harness 120 defines a front portion 122 and shoulder portion 124. The male fastener 50 and second female fastener 52 are located at the chest harness shoulder portion 124 and chest harness front portion 122, respectively. Accordingly, when the chest harness 120 is properly worn and the radio pocket assembly 22 is attached thereto using the fastener system 24b, the radio 28 is located conveniently on the chest of a person wearing the chest harness 120 as shown in FIG. 5. This location of the radio 28 allows the wearer of the chest harness 120 to perform an activity such as skiing or bicycling and still use the radio 28 with minimal or no use of hands.

Referring now to FIGS. 7a and 8a, it can be seen that the exemplary substrate 26c disclosed therein is a backpack 130. The backpack 130 comprises a front portion 132, a shoulder portion 134, and a rear portion 136. The third male fastener 60a is located at the shoulder portion 134, the front female fastener 62a at the backpack front portion 132, and rear female fastener 64a is located at the backpack rear portion 136.

As shown in FIGS. 7b and 8b, the backpack front portion 132 will typically be a strap that extends across the chest of the wearer of the backpack 130. Accordingly, when the radio 28 is in the first position as shown in FIG. 8b, the radio 28 is conveniently located for use by the wearer of the backpack 130.

However, in some situations the wearer may desire to have the radio 28b arranged away from the wearer's chest region. For example, the user may wish the radio to be in the second position is when the user is mountain biking and does not want any unnecessary equipment arranged in the chest area. In this case, the wearer may simply detach the male fastener 40 (first fastener) from the female fastener 62a (fourth fastener), swing the radio pocket assembly 22 from the first position into the second position without disconnecting the fasteners 42 and 60a (second and third fasteners) from each other, and then connect the male fastener 40 (first fastener) to the rear female fastener 64a (fifth fastener) to secure the radio 28 in its second position.

Referring now to FIGS. 9a and 10a, it can be seen that the fourth exemplary substrate 26d may be formed by a vest 140. The vest 140 defines a front portion 142, a shoulder portion 144, and a rear portion 146. The exemplary vest 140 is adapted to contain a hydration system that allows the user to carry a supply of water on the back and drink the water from a tube arranged in the wearer's chest area. Other types of vests 140 may be used with the principals of the present invention, however.

The system 20 may be placed in a third mode 20d in which the user locates the radio 28 either in front adjacent to the user's chest area or in back in a location adjacent to the user's shoulder blade.

In the first position, with the radio 28 located in front, the male fastener 40 (first fastener) is connected to the front female fastener 62b (fourth fastener) and the female fastener 42 (second fastener) is connected to the male fastener 60b (third fastener) located on the shoulder portion 144 of the

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vest 140. The radio 28 may be moved into its second position by detaching the male fastener 40 (first fastener) from the front female fastener 62b (fourth fastener), rotating the radio pocket assembly 22 from the first to the second position with the female fastener 42 (second fastener) engaging the male fastener 60b (fourth fastener), and then attaching the male fastener 40 (first fastener) to the rear female fastener 64b (fifth fastener).

From the foregoing, it should be clear that the radio pocket system 20 of the present invention provides the designer of the substrate 26 and the user of the radio 28 with significant flexibility in how the radio 28 may be positioned. In the first mode, the radio may be hung from any type of belt, belt loop, strap, or the like in a manner that is generally conventional. In the second mode, the radio pocket system 20 may be used with an article like the chest harness 120 that defines two fixed locations where the male fastener 50 and second female fastener 52 may be located. The exemplary chest harness 120 does not, however, define a third location that is conveniently fixed relative to the locations of the male and female fasteners 50 and 52, and thus does not allow the radio pocket assembly 22 to be moved into two different positions.

The backpack 130 and vest 140 described herein are examples of substrates 26 that define three fixed locations where the third male fastener 60 and front and rear female fasteners 62 and 64 may be located. Accordingly, the substrates 26 defined by the backpack 130 and vest 140 allow the radio pocket assembly 22 to be placed into either of two positions.

One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the exact details of construction of the substrates 26 are not important to the principals of the present invention. While the exemplary substrates 26a-d described herein are articles of clothing, the principles of the present invention may be applied to other types of substrates as well. For example, the substrate 26 may be formed by a surface on a toolbox, golf bag, automobile interior, or the like where a radio 28 is conveniently and temporarily stored. In addition, while the present invention was shown in first and second modes that allowed the radio to be in only one position and a third mode that allowed the radio 28 to be in two positions, additional fasteners as appropriate may be located to allow even more positions of the radio 28 relative to a given substrate 26.

Given the foregoing, it should be clear that the principals of the present invention may be applied to other environments, and the scope of the present invention should not be limited to the exemplary pocket assembly 22, substrates 26, radio 28 and retainer strap system 36 described herein.

I claim:

1. A system for holding an electronic device comprising:
  - a first substrate adapted to be supported by a wearer;
  - a second substrate adapted to be supported by a wearer;
  - a pocket assembly adapted to hold the electronic device;
  - a fastener system comprising
    - first and second fasteners rigidly connected to the pocket assembly, and
    - third, fourth, and fifth fasteners rigidly connected to the first substrate; whereby
      - the first fastener engages the third fastener and the second fastener engages the fourth fastener to attach the pocket assembly to the first substrate in a first position;
      - the first fastener engages the third fastener and the second fastener engages the fifth fastener to attach the pocket assembly to the first substrate in a second position; and
      - the first fastener engages the second fastener to place the pocket assembly in a loop configuration in which the

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pocket assembly extends around at least a portion of the second substrate to secure the pocket assembly to the second substrate.

2. A system as recited in claim 1, in which the pocket assembly comprises a flexible rear panel, where the rear panel is folded such that the first fastener can engage the second fastener when the pocket assembly is placed in the loop configuration.

3. A system as recited in claim 1, in which the first substrate is adapted to be supported by an upper torso of the wearer such that the third fastener is adjacent to the wearer's shoulder, the fourth fastener is adjacent to the wearer's chest, and the fifth fastener is adjacent to the wearer's back.

4. A system as recited in claim 3, in which the second substrate is a belt.

5. A system as recited in claim 1, in which the second substrate is a belt.

6. A system for holding an electronic device comprising: a first substrate adapted to be supported by a wearer; a pocket assembly adapted to hold the electronic device; and

a fastener system comprising

first and second fasteners rigidly connected to the pocket assembly, and

third, fourth, and fifth fasteners rigidly connected to the first substrate; whereby

the first fastener engages the third fastener and the second fastener engages the fourth fastener to attach the pocket assembly to the first substrate in a first position;

the first fastener engages the third fastener and the second fastener engages the fifth fastener to attach the pocket assembly to the first substrate in a second position; and the third, fourth, and fifth fasteners are spaced from each other such that

the electronic device is supported substantially in front of the wearer when the pocket assembly is in the first position; and

the electronic device is supported substantially behind of the wearer when the pocket assembly is in the second position.

7. A system as recited in claim 6, further comprising a second substrate, in which the first fastener engages the second fastener to place the pocket assembly in a loop configuration in which the pocket assembly extends around at least a portion of the second substrate to secure the pocket assembly to the second substrate.

8. A system as recited in claim 7, in which the pocket assembly comprises a flexible rear panel, where the rear panel is folded such that the first fastener can engage the second fastener when the pocket assembly is placed in the loop configuration.

9. A system as recited in claim 6, in which the first substrate is an article of clothing.

10. A system as recited in claim 9, in which, when the article of clothing is worn, the third fastener is adjacent to the wearer's shoulder, the fourth fastener is adjacent to the wearer's chest, and the fifth fastener is adjacent to the wearer's back.

11. A system as recited in claim 6, in which:

the first, fourth, and fifth fasteners are of a first type; and the second and third fasteners are of a second type, where the first and second types of fasteners are complementary such that fasteners of the first type engage fasteners of the second type to form a detachable attachment system.

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12. A system as recited in claim 11, in which: the first type of fastener is one of a female snap fastener and a male snap fastener; and the second type of fastener is another of a female snap fastener and a male snap fastener.

13. A system as recited in claim 11, in which: the first type of fastener is one of a button and a button hole; and the second type of fastener is another of a button and a button hole.

14. A system as recited in claim 11, in which: the first type of fastener is one of a hook fabric and a loop fabric; and

the second type of fastener is another of a hook fabric and a loop fabric.

15. A system as recited in claim 11, in which: the first type of fastener is one of a female fastener and a male fastener; and

the second type of fastener is another of a female fastener and a male fastener.

16. A method of holding an electronic device comprising the steps of:

supporting a first substrate on a wearer;

providing a pocket assembly adapted to hold the electronic device;

rigidly connecting first and second fasteners to the pocket assembly;

rigidly connecting third, fourth, and fifth fasteners to the substrate;

attaching the pocket assembly to the first substrate in a first position by engaging the first fastener with the third fastener and the second fastener with the fourth fastener; and

attaching the pocket assembly to the first substrate in a second position by engaging the first fastener with the third fastener and the second fastener with the fifth fastener;

spacing the third, fourth, and fifth fasteners from each other such that

the electronic device is supported substantially in front of the wearer when the pocket assembly is in the first position; and

the electronic device is supported substantially behind of the wearer when the pocket assembly is in the second position.

17. A method as recited in claim 16, further comprising the steps of:

providing a second substrate; and

placing the pocket assembly in a loop configuration in which the pocket assembly extends around at least a portion of the second substrate; and

securing the pocket assembly to the second substrate by engaging the first fastener with the second fastener.

18. A method as recited in claim 17, in which:

the step of providing the pocket assembly comprises the step of providing a flexible rear panel; and

the step of securing the pocket assembly to the second substrate in the third mode comprises the steps of folding the rear panel to place the pocket assembly in the loop configuration, and engaging the first fastener with the second fastener.

19. A method as recited in claim 16, further comprising the step of arranging the substrate such that the third fastener is adjacent to the wearer's shoulder, the fourth fastener is

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adjacent to the wearer's chest, and the fifth fastener is adjacent to the wearer's back.

20. A method of holding an electronic device comprising the steps of:

- supporting a first substrate on a wearer; 5
- providing a pocket assembly adapted to hold the electronic device;
- rigidly connecting first and second fasteners to the pocket assembly;
- rigidly connecting third, fourth, and fifth fasteners to the 10 substrate;
- attaching the pocket assembly to the first substrate in a first position by engaging the first fastener with the

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third fastener and the second fastener with the fourth fastener;

attaching the pocket assembly to the first substrate in a second position by engaging the first fastener with the third fastener and the second fastener with the fifth fastener; and

arranging the substrate such that the third fastener is adjacent to the wearer's shoulder, the fourth fastener is adjacent to the wearer's chest, and the fifth fastener is adjacent to the wearer's back.

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